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ABSTRACT

A discussion is presented of the role of educational leaders in determining directions and priorities in the fields of community, compensatory, and collegiate education in the community colleges. The first section addresses the colleges' failure to integrate compensatory education fully within the curriculum and raises 10 agruments as to why this may bave been the case, including the cost, lack of faculty support, lack of articulation with secondary schools, faculty inability to teach literacy, too much experimentation, too few demands made of students, inconsistent standards, inappropriateness of tests, inadequate support services, and the inappropriateness of the community college as a place for developmental education. Each of these criticisms is examined, and counter-arguments are posed. The second section presents problems faced in community education, including difficulties of definition, changes in funding patterns, articulation with other programs, and lack of leadership. The third section considers collegiate education, examining the decline of courses and programs for which academic degree credit is offered, raising questions regarding the future of the transfer function, and presenting methods to strengthen college-level courses. Finally, the role of college leaders in addressing these problems of community, compensatory, and collegiate education is examined. (HB)

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Guiding the Educational Program

Arthur M. Cohen

In a book on leadership in the community colleges, the questions must be asked, Who plots directions for the educational program? Who considers the potential effects of changes in students, staff, funding, and the myriad other influences? If the questions were put to the staff in most colleges, some would respond, "The faculty"; others, "The dean of instruction," or, "The board." The less circumspect would say, "Everyone," or, "No one." The true answer depends on the history of the institution and the type of leadership it enjoys.

The analysts who present information on trends in curriculum, demography, and public perception of the colleges are actually trying to stimulate consideration of what they feel are important issues. Yet they realize that theirs is a precarious exercise. Its success depends on their audience's taking a broad, long-term view of their work, rising above the quotidian. The prophets are not without honor; there are always a few readers who appreciate the literate scholars of education. But the reactions of most educators reveal the uneasy mixture of pride, diffidence, and defensiveness that lies just beneath the surface of a seemingly placid field.

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The practitioners' reactions to data offer a case in point. Most of them attend to the verbal, the immediate, the readily apprehended. They find it difficult to assimilate information stemming from nationwide studies. There is too much missing. What do demographic charts showing static numbers of college-age students have to do with next fall's class schedule? How do declining test scores made by high school graduates

relate to tomorrow's class? Most instructors dismiss information coming from statewide or regional studies as irrelevant to them. They want to know how to keep students coming to class, how to keep their attention. The administrators seek only those nuggets useful in their own deliberations over fiscal and personnel allocations. The field tends inward; people want information that they can use to solve problems of the day. This characteristic would be acceptable if colleges functioned well as autocracies; no need then for the rank and file to be concerned with overarching matters. But education thrives best when its practitioners act as professionals who integrate what they learn. It does least well when educators deny the data, become angry with those who present them, or dissociate themselves from them.

The process is as follows. First, the denial: "The data (on student learning, e.g.) are wrong because in my class it's different." There is a reason for this type of denial. Most instructors are typically attuned to their own classrooms and are not aware of, not concerned with, don't understand, and don't want to know what is going on across the nation. They focus on individual students, not collectivities. They think of the one student who came into their class reading at a third grade level, gained two or three grades of achievement in one semester, and eventually transferred and graduated with honors. Most instructors have those types of success stories, and they relish them. That's what allows the instructors to survive in face of the greater knowledge of how little their students learn <u>as a group</u> over the years. That's why they shrink from writing specific objectives, predicting group performance, and giving end of course criterion-based examinations. They want to remember the individual successes.

The second response often is annoyance: "Even if the data are correct they should not be publicized because they will be used by people who want to destroy the community college, or, more specifically, my program within it." The practitioners fear that reporting accurate data about student retention, academic standards, curriculum outcomes, course completions, and so on, will be turned against them. Instead of using the data as a base for program change and program support, they shortsightedly become angry with the researchers who present them.

The third response is typically dissociation: "Even if the information (about student learning) is correct, it's not our fault. Blame the breakdown in the nuclear family, the lack of respect for authority in society, television viewing, the lower schools that don't teach literacy, the universities that maintain unrealistic expectations--anybody but us." They have numerous excuses, villains, ways of refusing to accept responsibility for their students' failure to read and write, for their own inabilities to teach them.

Fortunately, nearly every college has at least a few astute faculty and administrators who know that they must act also as educational planners. Instead of denying the data, they look to be sure they were correctly collected and analyzed and then how the implications stemming from them can enhance the college's actions. Anger over the publicity is beneath them. They know they live in a political context where the constructive use of potentially damaging data is the best defense. And they realize that dissociation is short-sighted. Of course it would be better if students were literate, but every home has a television set. The students in community colleges are there to be taught; it is idle to wish they were better prepared and more ready to learn.

Still, there is no surfeit of leaders who articulate logical educational plans and pursue them consistently. That lack affects all the programs: career, compensatory, community, and collegiate education alike. Career education can survive the lack of plans; each program within it has its corps of supporters among area employers, and many have their own separate funding channels. Furthermore, the colleges have for so long been promoted as essential for training people for technological and semiprofessional jobs that most students and their families probably feel that that is their main purpose. The worst that happens to career education is that it has to suffer occasional accusations: first, that it is an instrument of a capitalistic society helping to perpetuate the system; second, that all students who pass through its programs do not necessarily attain employment in the field for which they were trained. But the proponents of career education tend to disregard those criticisms as niggling attacks by envious outsiders. On the ascendancy since the mid-1960s, career education is in a secure position.

For the educational leaders in other fields, this chapter addresses compensatory, community, and collegiate education. The section on compensatory education (also known as developmental or remedial studies), is based on 10 criticisms along with corresponding counterarguments that were discussed at an Arizona State University conference in 1982. The section on community education considers the status of that endeavor at a time when funds for its support were being cut drastically. And the collegiate education section shows how that function will thrive only if it is reconceptualized to fit the community college as it is, not how it was prior to 1965.

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Compensatory or developmental education is not new to the colleges, but its magnitude has increased notably in recent years. Nationwide, one-third of the students taking mathematics--60% in the large, urban districts--are in classes that teach nothing higher than arithmetic. Around 40% of the English classes are teaching basic reading, vocabulary, and word usage. This enterprise grew massive because of the poor preparation received by entering students, but it typically has not been fully integrated into the college curriculum. Why?

First criticism: the community college is the wrong place to do compensatory education. Some have contended that developmental education belongs better in the adult schools, in the private sector, or in corporate, on-the-job training programs.

The obvious response is that the community colleges may not be the best place to do compensatory education, but they are stuck with it. Developmental education has become the general education for the community colleges of the 1980s, and it continues to grow. Compensatory education's importance should be no surprise. It stems from the changes in the types of students coming to the colleges. In the early part of the 19th century, colleges opened for women, and coed colleges followed. Thereupon, it became immoral to bar women from collegiate studies. In the latter part of the century the land grant colleges opened, making it possible for children of the less affluent to go to college. It then became immoral to bar people of modest income. The civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s led to the belief that it was immoral to bar members of ethnic minority populations from going to college. More recently, the various financial aid programs have made it immoral to bar

the indigent. Most recently, it has become immoral to bar the physically handicapped. And the open-access, open-door community college finds it unfeasible and, indeed, immoral to bar the ignorant. It has become immoral to deny anyone access to college just because that person cannot read, write, or compute. The colleges' involvement with compensatory education rests on that.

In the 1960s and the 1970s, the community colleges were dedicated primarily to one theme: access. Open the door, get everyone in, build programs for returning women, veterans, drug abusers, displaced homemakers, people with too much time on their hands, people without enough time to learn what they need to know to progress in their specialized area of work. The colleges built programs to attract people from every corner of the community. And the enrollments swelled. Now that everyone who can reasonably be enticed to come to the institution has enrolled, the next issue is going to be that they must be taught. And that suggests literacy development.

Second criticism: Compensatory education costs too much. How many times should the public have to pay to teach the same person how to read? The argument is that compensatory education yields a low benefit for a high cost, that the taxpayers will not be willing to pay for the same type of instruction over and over.

Many of the community college leaders have responded that it costs less to teach developmental education in community colleges than in universities and other institutions. It is time they stopped talking about the economies of the community college versus the university. It makes them sound like a restaurant owner who says, "Our food is not good, but it's cheap." That is not a very apt way of advertising.

Nonetheless, there are many ways of making developmental education better without spending more. The practitioners of instruction, faculty and administrators alike, have yet to understand that paraprofessional aides can greatly enhance developmental education--as, indeed all other types of education--while holding costs down. Using senior citizens, other lay people, and advanced students as aides to the faculty and tutors to the students who need assistance can be quite salutary. They can assist in numerous ways and they will work for a pittance. Yet, few college staff members have understood or want to understand how to take advantage of the great pool of economical assistance available in the person of advanced students and senior citizens. The mores of the educators seem to mitigate their understanding that successful teaching does not necessarily depend on a $30,000 a year professional person working on a one-to-one basis with a student.

Third criticism: Because the academic faculty do not want or know how to teach literacy, developmental education should be operated as a separate department.

That is wrong. The community colleges are so deeply involved in developmental education that it must involve the total faculty. Every faculty member is affected. In the open-access community college the only programs that can control entry are those that are in high demand, such as the high technology and the allied health programs. They can afford to be selective and can demand literacy. But, none of the other programs enjoy that prerogative. In all the other curriculums the students must be taught whether or not they can read and write at the outset. Separate developmental studies programs or departments only serve to widen a gulf that already exists between faculty with high

pretensions (those who neither know how nor want to teach literacy) and those who are involved with developmental education all the way. A separate developmental studies department also suggests tracking, a concept that has adverse connotations of its own.

Every program, every department should have a developmental education component within it. Developmental education should be build into the courses in all departments; either separate courses within the department, or, better, literacy in every course. Less than 5% of the students in community colleges nationwide complete two years and transfer to the university. Less than 10% are enrolled in courses for which there is a prerequisite. The entire institution has become a combination of introductory courses and developmental studies. The community college is well on its way toward becoming a grade-13-plus-less-than-college-level institution. It is in danger of losing the sophomore year. Separate developmental studies departments serve only to accelerate that trend. Developmental education should be integrated into every course.

Fourth criticism: There is insufficient articulation with the secondary schools. That is a justified criticism. When the community college was young, grown out of secondary school districts in many states, many of its instructors taught in the high school in the daytime and in the community college at night. Most of the full-time community college instructors were former secondary school teachers. Now, that connection has been weakened. The community colleges demanded the right to become a part of higher education and, as they did, they tended to turn their backs on the secondary schools. Since less than 5% of the community college students complete two years and go to the university,

but practically all of them come from the neighboring secondary schools, the community colleges are facing the wrong way.

Educational leaders in some states are trying to rebuild the links between higher education and the secondary schools. California public colleges and universities issued a joint statement in 1981 contending that students in college preparation programs in grades 9 through 12 should include a minimum of four years of English and a minimum of three years of math. A report from New Jersey noted, "The level of proficiency required to complete three years of high school English and math is considerably lower than the proficiency expected of entering freshmen in the institutions of this state" (Edge, 1979). And the president of Miami-Dade Community College collected data on the preparation level of entering students and presented those data to the secondary schools in his area.

Criticism five: The faculty don't know how to teach literacy. That criticism may be warranted generally, but there is much variation among instructors. Surely, few instructors enjoy teaching students who do not know how to read and write; most want bright, capable, literate individuals eager to learn the most specialized bits of subject matter. But those students are not forthcoming.

This suggests a role for the developmental educators. They should treat the faculty in the collegiate programs as their students. Instead of isolating themselves in a separate department to which the collegiate faculty happily send their poorer students, they should work directly with that faculty. That is one of the reasons for integrating developmental studies within the academic departments; it brings the developmental educator into association with the collegiate faculty. It allows the developmental educator to become an educator of instructors.

Criticism six: There is too much experimentation and too few results. That is a justifiable criticism. We know what types of programs work. Every college president can point to a special program where a few dozen students are getting a high intensity experience, a program in which a few students are learning to read so well they are moving up three grade levels in one semester. But those programs are not feasibly extended to the population at large. Throwing a high faculty/student ratio, special additional funds, and a high level of involvement for support people at small groups of students yields wondrous results. But that is not nearly enough. Developmental education must be woven into the fabric of the institution.

Criticism seven: We ask too little. That may sound strange, but few teachers use readers or paraprofessional aides to assist in reacting to students' writing; they merely assign fewer papers.

Writing is a skill learned through practice, just as speaking is a skill learned through practice. We become literate by reading and writing, whether by joy or coercion or some combination of both. Literacy is developed by doing it; people cannot learn to write unless they sit down and write. Most of the problems in literacy development that are being faced in the community colleges, that is, the portions of the problem that the schools have the power to mitigate, can be traced to declining demands. The schools do not demand as much reading and writing as they did a generation ago. Less practice yields poorer results.

Eighth criticism: There are inconsistent standards in the classrooms. This criticism is certainly warranted. Different demands are placed on students in different fields, and in different classes in the

same field. An alert student can track a path through the college without ever being asked to write a paper.

Surveys have found tremendous variation in reading and writing requirements, not only between fields, but also between instructors in the same field. There may be as much variation between instructors teaching the same types of courses in the same discipline as there is between disciplines. As long as students can find courses that do not demand writing, it remains difficult to effect literacy development in the institution.

Criticism nine: Placement and diagnostic tests are not valid. The tests are usually seen as culturally biased and are not relevant except to English and mathematics.

These objections can be countered. Every test of anything is culturally biased; the entire school system is culturally biased. A culture-free test for admission to certain classes in school would be biased if it did not test students' ability to succeed in those classes. The classes are culturally biased; thus, a culture-free test would not be valid. Of course, the tests are not relevant to courses other than English and math because few people know what instructors in those other courses expect. It is not valid to ask applicants to take a reading test if they may go through the institution taking courses where they just have to watch films. Which tests should be used? And when? Who should administer them?

Miami-Dade Community College has a procedure whereby any student who enrolls for more than three classes all at once or in sequence, or any student who enrolls for a class in English or math, is sent to the testing center to take a placement examination in English and mathematics

(Kelly, 1981). On the basis of the results the student is counseled into certain sections of those courses. But that type of student-flagging depends on a sophisticated student monitoring system. Few institutions are set up to do that. Students may go along taking course after course without ever having been tested. Only when they sign up for an English or math class does the testing procedure come into effect. And even then, it may be a homemade test devised by the members of that department. Nonetheless, more testing is better than less in the current climate.

Last criticism: The support services are not worth what they cost. Counseling, tutorials, learning laboratories, and other types of student learning areas that have been built outside the formal classrooms have been accused of being too costly for what they provide. That may be so, but there is good reason for it. The reason is that the classroom instructors have tended to have little affiliation with the supportive activities. The learning laboratory is managed typically by a learning resource director. The tutorial center may be managed by some other group. There is very little association between course content and any of the ancillary services. Few instructors work with support people.

That suggests another role for the developmental educators. They must bring the support activities and the instructors together, showing the instructors how they can use the support services as a way of bolstering their own instruction. The instructors need to be helped to integrate the work they are doing in the classrooms with the services available. They themselves need to feel confident in their use of support services.

To conclude, compensatory education is now part of the reality of the community colleges. The students entering in the coming years are not going to be more learned. But the slide away from the higher learning may have gone as far as it can go for a while. Various demands for increased linearity in curriculum and student placement are being made. Sophomore-level achievement tests are being introduced in several states. And at least a few educators have realized that if the colleges are to maintain their transfer function, developmental education must be built into it.

The solution is not to undertake misguided action. For example, it is not feasible to limit the number of courses an employed student may take; more than 70% of the students work now. Nor is it feasible to hold students out of the collegiate courses until they prove they can read; too few students can read at the level that their instructors would prefer. But support services can be mandated; and tutorials and learning laboratory activities can be integrated with classroom instruction. Every instructor can demand reading and writing in every classroom. Exit tests can be offered so that the colleges can demonstrate what their programs have actually done, whether or not the students transfer. Literacy development can become the community colleges' strength.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Community education presents a set of different problems. First, what is it? Like most community college programs, its roots are in the senior institutions. University extension courses, agricultural experiment stations, and professors' consultancies and research concerned with

extramural problems all suggest service to the community. In most universities those activities were seen as an important function. But organizationally they developed apart from the degree-credit programs. They now tend to be housed, funded, and staffed in separate divisions.

In the community colleges, community services developed similarly but in a much more limited fashion. Their instructors typically were not researchers, and few acted as consultants on community projects. Agricultural or other direct service activities were at a minimum. The major similarity was in the short courses offered not for degree credit, in a fashion like university extension. These too tended to be funded and staffed separately.

Thus the community education dimension of community colleges centered on unconnected courses, events, and short-term programs. Its guiding principles were that any activity that any group from the local community wanted was properly presented. It was defined by exclusion: community service was any activity not included in the traditional transfer and occupational programs.

By 1980 the definition of community services as anything that anyone wanted had fallen into disrepute, due primarily to problems of funding and image. Community colleges in many states found their local funding base severely reduced. It is that base that was being used to pay for the recreational and cultural activities. State level funding formulas became more restrictive, excluding a sizable complement of noncredit courses or activities that fell outside traditional curriculum support. As one example, in 1982, when the California Community College Board of Governors issued a list of courses that would no longer be eligible for state reimbursement, Coastline Community College, an insti-

tution centering on community services, had to eliminate 30% of its class sections (Luskin, 1982).

The cutbacks in funding rekindled attempts to redefine community services. But first it was necessary to put the old definition to rest. Richardson and Leslie (1980) noted that in periods of reduced support for education, the colleges would be hard put to maintain hobby and recreational programs. Breneman and Nelson (1981) explained how state-level funding typically put programs designed for the good of society as a whole ahead of those directed toward individual interests. Parnell (1982) challenged the personal interest activities because they were damaging the colleges' image. He felt that the public relations costs of belly dancing, poodle grooming, and macrame were more than the community colleges could afford. Even when those activities were fully supported by participants, the public perceived them as evidence that the community college was not a serious educational institution. He was willing to "bequeath" them "to the local YMCA, local YWCA, senior citizens' center, or other community service organizations not faced with projecting the same kind of image that colleges must maintain for continued legislative and general public support."

If community services can no longer be justified as useful to individuals, how can they be redefined? Perhaps because they anticipated lack of support for unconnected activities, some proponents of community education began promoting it as community development. To them the community college could enhance a sense of community, assist in solving community problems, and, in general, uplift the social, political, and economic climate of its region. It would do this by offering workshops, consultantships, and surveys to its local community. The activities

would include short courses for target groups such as employees of certain industries, forums on local social problems and on national and international affairs, and consumer education.

The term "community-based education" also gained currency. It is somewhat of an amalgamation of the traditional community services concept with the newer idea of community development. Under community-based education the local citizenry are encouraged to advise the institution on issues that should be addressed. The college planners arrange the forums and short courses. Both the advisory groups and the institutional leaders attempt to stimulate other community agencies also to address the identified problems. Courses and seminars may be offered by the college alone or in conjunction with other community groups.

Community development and activities planned with and on behalf of the local community have made some progress. The thread holding them together is that they represent a break with college credit, discipline-based educational forms. But educational institutions are slow to change, and community education is far from a central position among community college functions. Atwell, Vaughan, and Sullins (1982) addressed the reasons for its failure to achieve prominence and found five: too few college staff members who understand the concept; sizable enrollments which give the illusion of success; the failure of coordinated leadership on individual campuses; lack of a sound funding base; and diverse messages coming from national leaders. They concluded that until the disparate activities conducted in the name of community education were linked together into a program with consistent long-term goals, community education would not achieve the prominence it deserved.

Can community education be coordinated into a program with long-term goals? One problem with that idea is that as soon as community education is defined and put into a program, it risks being coopted by the traditional career and collegiate education programs. If one of the goals is that community education enhance the work skills of the populace, even those skills that fit them particularly for local industries, the career education group takes it over and makes it one of their curriculums. If one of the goals is to enhance the people's knowledge of the history or ecology of their region, the academic faculty can make that part of their offerings in science, social science, and the humanities. Once brought to public view, a consistent program of community education becomes only another way of formatting the career and collegiate curricula. Not incidentally, that may be its greatest contribution.

Even without attempting to coordinate a program with consistent, long-term goals, community education has other problems. For one thing, it poses a threat to the full-time instructors. Community service programs historically have been developed without involving the regular faculty; the community service directors merely arranged for lay people or part-time instructors to lead the activities. Where the community service directors have been sufficiently astute to realize that involving the regular instructors in their programs is a way of gaining collegewide support, the instructors have taken part in the events. But too often the directors have been perceived as holding their programs apart. Through their unions and new-found political power the regular faculty can no longer be ignored by anyone who wants to develop a viable community education program.

New types of funding patterns will also have to be developed if community education is to thrive. When community services are put into competition with the career and collegiate programs, they usually lose. The idea of supporting those courses that offer credit toward academic degrees or occupational certificates is too powerful for a community service director to overcome. Community education might thrive if the community service division could be funded programmatically; for years community colleges in California funded their community services in large measure through the imposition of a special five cent tax override earmarked for that purpose, but by the end of 1970s, that tax became no longer available to them. Some states have made progress in funding community services through block grants, but in an era of tight money for education it may be difficult to make additional progress.

Institutional leadership on behalf of community services is not widespread. Some community college leaders have taken on service to the community as their personal mission and built strong community education programs outside the traditional curricula. But few others have been willing to become so identified with a single function. Most prefer to remain--or at least give the appearance of remaining--even handed in their treatment of all the functions.

Community education proponents who see their services as community development face even greater problems. The community colleges have never done well in presenting evidence of individual students' learning. It would be even more difficult for them to demonstrate their success in uplifting entire communities. The most partisan advocate of community development should recognize the difficulty in providing that type of evidence. Community development as a goal also brings the community

colleges into competition with other community agencies whose directors may not take kindly to the colleges entering their arena. The community colleges are schools, not social welfare agencies. The gap between public perception of them as schools and as agencies of community uplift is too great for them to overcome in the near future. The move from local to state funding alone should be sufficient to discourage the advocates of community development. As long as community services are seen as benefiting individuals instead of the broader society they will not enjoy widespread support in the state capitals.

The community colleges have been turning rapidly to put their community services on a pay-as-you-go basis with the costs being borne by the consumers. Should that trend continue, community services may well remain adjunctive. At most, they would develop as university extension divisions have developed, completely separate from the degree-credit programs with the exception of a general oversight on the part of the parent institution's faculty. Some community services directors have attempted to build such separate divisions; others have taken a different approach and attempted to fund their programs through contracts with local industries. In the latter case the community education division has become a holding company for service contracts with private employers and governmental agencies.

Parnell has said that community services should deal with community problems, not community entertainment and trivialities. He challenged the colleges to provide information about "toxic waste disposal, energy conservation, economic survival, improving intergroup human relations." According to his concept, the colleges might thereby connect community services with the traditional college disciplines and curriculum, thus

involving the regular full-time faculty in presenting such programs. Parnell is not the first to articulate such an idea; as community services evolved into community education, college leaders such as Harlacher and Gollattscheck (1978) saw the concept shifting from personal to social issues.

Community education seems poised to go in either, perhaps both, of two directions. One is toward a separate division funded, staffed, and operated apart from the regular college programs. The model for such a separation is afforded by the university extension divisions that offer cultural, recreational, and short-term occupational programs and activities on a self-sustaining basis. If the institutions that build such divisions promote them properly they can readily overcome the charge that taxpayer funds are being squandered on activities of little value except to the people who participate in them. The UCLA Extension catalog for fall 1982 offered 220 pages of courses in business, the arts, the humanities, education, and the sciences, among others, all on a self-sustaining basis. Carefully noted on the inside front cover was the statement, "Not printed at state expense. UCLA Extension receives no state tax monies whatever. Its program of continuing education is supported entirely from student enrollment fees."

Another promising route for community education is for the community services division to be collapsed entirely and reconstituted as a different arm of the college. The division would offer no courses or activities. Instead, a team of community education specialists comprised of administrators and faculty on temporary assignment would act as advisors to the career and collegiate programs. They would help the faculty in those programs organize events such as exhibits, forums,

recitals, and lecture series. They would organize community surveys and commission the social science students and instructors to conduct them. They would encourage the instructors in the sciences to include issues pertaining to local environmental concerns in their courses. They would arrange for assessments of occupational trends in the community and assist the career educators in organizing programs to accommodate them. They would help the collegiate faculty build general education programs to prepare a generally educated citizenry cohort by cohort. In sum, they would be facilitators, organizers, leaders bridging the gap between community education and the career and collegiate degree credit programs. Their work would supplant that of the institutional research directors who in a few institutions have performed such functions but who in most have been charged with collecting other types of data. They would act on behalf of the instructional program, integrating their activities with the traditional functions, helping modify those functions so that they became more attuned to concepts of community education. To the extent they were successful the entire college would become a community service.

COLLEGIATE EDUCATION

Collegiate education is the term used for all courses and programs for which academic degree credit is offered. When the community colleges began, most of their curriculum was college credit. But the proportion of their offerings that yields credit for transfer has diminished steadily in recent years. Most of the rhetoric and a large part of the reality of the community college in recent years has been dedicated to compensatory noncredit education, career education, and service to the community.

How much has collegiate education suffered? It is not difficult to trace the fate of the collegiate function because it is embedded in the associate-degree program, and figures on numbers of degrees awarded are collected routinely. During the decade of the 1970s the number of associate in arts and associate in science degrees conferred changed hardly at all: from 145,473 in 1970-71 to 152,169 in 1979-80 (Cohen & Brawer, 1982, p. 203). Yet community college enrollments doubled during those same years. Thus the number of students completing the transfer programs declined notably as a percentage of total enrollments.

The reasons for this decline are also not difficult to trace. The cohort of people born during the post-World War II baby boom came of college age in the 1960s and clamored for access to higher education. Because the universities could not take all those students the community colleges expanded rapidly to accommodate them. Since a sizable proportion of the students had aspirations for the baccalaureate, they inflated the transfer program figures.

A second phenomenon of the mid-1960s was that the purpose of college going became inverted. In earlier generations the young people who wanted to go to work apprenticed to tradesmen or took entry-level jobs in business, while the ones who wanted to study the liberal arts went to college. That pattern turned around so that those who sought jobs went to school and demanded that the institution prepare them to earn a living. Accordingly, career education grew dramatically during the 1960s and 1970s as educators and students alike became convinced that unless there was a job waiting at the end of the program, the education was wasted. Conversely many of those who wanted to study the liberal arts began doing so on their own in university extension divisions, adult schools, and through community college community service programs.

Another influence on the transfer program also began in the 1960s when the first generation of young people reared from infancy on television entered the colleges. The collegiate function had been based on the apprehension of texts. But this new group's main method of information reception was through nonprint media, and they ascribed little value to reading and writing. Although that cohort of students has been in the institutions for a generation, few of the instructors in the transfer programs have learned how to educate them.

The transfer program suffered also from the decline in academic studies in the nation's high schools. During the 1960s and 1970s the requirements for high school graduation changed so that students took considerably less English, history, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Boyer (1980) documented that trend, showing how the academic courses had been replaced by driver education, personal interest courses, and reduced time spent in school.

Reduced high school graduation requirements were followed by reduced academic graduation requirements and grade inflation in the colleges. Blackburn and others (1976) detailed the reduction in academic requirements and found that although the reduction in two-year colleges was not as severe as that in four-year institutions, it still was marked. Numerous community colleges made their own contribution to grade inflation in higher education during that period by allowing students the option of withdrawing from classes without penalty at any time up until the last week of the term.

As a consequence of that collection of influences, the curriculum in the academic transfer programs in community colleges flattened out. Instead of a linear sequence with students starting with introductory

courses and progressing to advanced courses, it tended to take lateral form. By the beginning of the 1980s the catalogs still displayed a complete array of course prerequisites and graduation expectations, but many students were attending the colleges as though there were no requirements. Except for the students in occupational programs that had selective entry and licensure requirements, 90% of the enrollment was in courses for which there was no prerequisite or in which the prerequisite was not enforced. Introductory courses and courses that were not part of any sequence occupied the major portion of the academic program.

Should community college planners be concerned with the collegiate function? Many would say that it is archaic, that students want jobs, not the higher learning. They point to the part-timers who have swelled the enrollment figures in their quest for skills leading to immediate employment or upgrading within jobs they already hold. They claim that the institution has become in reality an adult education center where sequenced curriculum is not properly a consideration of the programs. To them the biggest problem is how to convince the legislators and the public that this transformation in institutional purpose has actually occurred so that new funding patterns can be devised to accommodate it.

However, the transfer program, the collegiate function, the academic dimension of the community college cannot be written off casually. A sizable proportion of the public still sees transfer education as the college's primary function; a Gallup Poll sponsored by AACJC in 1977 found nearly half the people interviewed identifying transfer studies as the main mission. Nor can funding formulas be overturned easily. As educators in many states have learned to their dismay, legislators still accord the highest priority to occupational and transfer studies.

Certain other factors point also to continuation of the academic program. The community colleges were never successful in attracting sizable numbers of serious, literate scholars with a commitment to learning. They offered academic studies from the start, but as their clients changed they changed their mission to fit the proclivities of the new students. Still, the colleges represented the point of first entry to higher education for many people who would not otherwise go to college. That is the true meaning of expanded access: access for the underprivileged. Were the colleges to abandon the collegiate function, an entire social stratum would be ill-served. That type of society-affecting decision should not be made lightly.

Besides, who can say with certainty that the collegiate function is outmoded? Historically, obtaining a college degree represented a form of accomplishment. It showed that the person had persisted through a course of study of his or her own volition, had been exposed to the major ideas and concepts undergirding our society, had learned to communicate passably well with others similarly trained. The highest status, highest paying jobs in our society still tend to go to the college educated, especially to those who have not been through a program preparing them for work in a specific occupation. True, the more specific the skill, the easier to teach it, but the more specific the skill, the less it is applicable outside particular situations and the more rapidly it becomes obsolete. And it is not sufficient to say that students learning specific skills acquire general concepts along the way; Gresham's Law applied to education holds that the specific training crowds out the general education.

The major difficulty in the academic transfer programs is that they have not been reconceptualized to fit the changes of the past two decades. When faced with students who were not the independent, self-directed learners they fondly--and perhaps inaccurately--remembered, the educators have been too ready to say, "Well, we cannot teach higher order concepts because the students cannot grasp them, therefore we will reduce the education to a few specifics that we can teach. The students cannot write because they were not taught to write in the lower schools, therefore we will not ask them to write. Since they tend not to read, we will demand less reading from them. We will fit the education to the 'needs' of the learner." Numerous studies, including several done at the Center for the Study of Community Colleges and by Richardson and his associates have demonstrated these proclivities.

Education demands time spent on tasks; short-cycle experiences do not help students learn to conceptualize. Education is linear, sequential; it does not always proceed in a straight line from lesser to higher order concepts, but it does demand aggregation. Education takes time; reduced demands for time on task in the lower schools was accompanied by reduced learning there. Reducing education to that which can be learned in a single session reduces it to a series of rapidly obsolete skills. The excuse that students will not show up for classes in sequence, will withdraw from school if too many demands are placed on them, will not write papers or perform other tasks that require them to bring together knowledge from several areas, is just that--an excuse to show progress by teaching the trivial. There is much evidence to show that greater expectations, higher demands, and carefully tailored support services yield considerably greater results.

The problem of the trivial driving out the general is not one for advocates of the higher learning to consider alone. Many employers have reacted to the same phenomenon. The goals of the collegiate function are often stated as helping the students to gain a cultural perspective, understand their heritage, gain better interpersonal relations, learn critical thinking, learn to communicate. These were the general abilities that employers expected students to present when they had completed secondary school, the reason why the high school diploma was a precondition of job application. The diploma has lost its credibility, and many employers now want college graduates as applicants for entry-level positions. They expect more than people with specific skills only.

The community colleges have made several changes in their effort to be accepted by employers and to be relevant to students. They have allowed the specifics of remedial and occupational education to drive out the general of the liberal arts. Many of their leaders felt they were doing a service by making it easier for students to obtain a certificate or credential. Yet that was destructive to curricular sequence. When students can drop in and out of classes, withdraw at any time with no penalty, take classes off campus at places and times of their own choosing, sign up for almost any course without fulfilling prerequisites, the trivial has crowded out the educative dimension.

The case for the collegiate functions rests not on nostalgia for a time when upper class gentlemen and ladies went to college to learn sets of manners. Instead it is based on a belief that an exclusive emphasis on the specifics offers little to students who would make their way in the world. Employers will not be satisfied with people who are minimally able to communicate, think, and understand. Young people who

are awarded credentials that have lost their value have not been well served.

"But the students don't know how to study. They can't learn. They aren't able." Can the colleges change the students' approach to education? How much is within their control? They cannot change the students' pattern of television watching. They cannot change the reasons why students come to school. However, they can effect changes in the courses they take, the sequences in which they take them, and the requirements within the courses, the demands they make. They do not have to continue allowing students to drop in and out of the institution haphazardly. They do not have to emphasize the trivial.

The term "college level" is often used as a way of differentiating between remedial education and the higher learning. The term is not precise; its meaning fluctuates. It is probably best defined as being the average of the demands placed on students in all sections of all courses of that type in all community colleges. It can be assessed by asking instructors questions regarding course requirements, grading standards, texts in use, number of pages students are required to read, and so on. It is related to content only as the content leads students to increased literacy, reflection, understanding of alternatives, ethical issues, questions of morality, realization of past and present time. A course in a nursing program may be "college level" whereas a course in United States history may not. It depends on the demands it makes; it depends on the instructor's expectations.

The collegiate function faces a long period of difficult times. Tradition, public perception, and the faculty who teach the academic courses ensure that the function will not readily disappear. Operating

against it are the student demands for quick access to jobs, the poor academic preparation of entering students, and the college leaders who believe their institution serves its community best when it offers up a wide variety of unconnected events.

The collegiate function will survive because of inertia, but if it is to thrive, the liberal arts will have to be reconceptualized to fit the reality of the community college. Can they be taught without expecting students to read or demand that they write? Can they be taught to students who shun any activity that does not promise to connect them quickly with a job? Can they be merged with general education so that a unique community college collegiate experience is effected? The curriculum planners grope for ways of doing it.

In the interim between now and the time when the necessary reconceptualization emerges, several well-meaning and in some cases modestly effective attempts are being made to patch over the problems. One is to reinstate selective admissions into the college-level courses. Institutions that have done this have been forced to tailor special admissions tests for their clients and to build extensive developmental education programs. In other colleges the students are allowed to enroll in the collegiate courses but are required to participate in an extensive array of concurrent instructional support activities including tutorials, counseling, and media-based programs. Some community college systems have moved so markedly in the direction of occupational and adult basic education that they have let the collegiate function wash out of the institution entirely. All those options are feasible and each has its corps of supporters. Each can be and is being done in the context of the contemporary college.

Integrating the collegiate function with community education shows promise, at least in principle. The college that has a sizable cohort of students working on community problems even while they attend collegiate courses may be on the way to the needed reconceptualization of the collegiate function with the realities of the community college. The colleges' community base demands that its students and faculty be in close contact with local issues. Yet its role in higher education demands that its courses maintain academic rigor. And, again, academic rigor depends more on the demands for literacy placed on the students than it does on the course content. For that reason the course materials, including textbooks, will have to be prepared by the faculty within the community college themselves. And much data will have to be gathered to show that the courses are academically respectable even though the content differs from that presented in the lower division of the senior institutions.

LEADERSHIP

Compensatory education needs to be merged with the degree-credit courses, community services should be split into a totally separate division, the collegiate function must be bolstered with a comprehensive array of especially designed support services. There are challenges aplenty for the forward-looking presidents, deans, program coordinators, and division chairs.

Will they do it? Possibly, because they have been forced to shift focus. During the era of growth, the time when most current administrators assumed their responsibilities, the introduction of new programs was applauded. It was easy for administrators to say they were serving

new clients, hence increasing their institution's value to the community. Few seemed to realize that each new program, once institutionalized, would become a source of rigidity that would stand to block future change. Even though few of the new programs became written into law, they did bring with them their complement of staff, hence supporters. Furthermore, few of the effects of new patterns of services were anticipated. Few community college leaders realized that opening access to people with decidedly undistinguished prior school records would eventually lessen their college's value for the better students. They were unprepared for the decline in preparation in the secondary schools. They ignored the demographics which could have warned them that when the sizable cohort of people born in the late 1940s and early 1950s had passed through their colleges, there would be a smaller pool of well-qualified students and that those students would tend to opt for the senior institutions.

The leaders need vision. As one example, when growth was the sine qua non of the community college, the questions most commonly asked were how to staff the institution properly, how to recruit students from among populations not otherwise being served, and how to gain approval for new programs. The literature was filled with plans for staff development, new forms of financing, and new program descriptions. The leaders who subscribed to growth attempted to pull the institutions toward broader patterns of service including adult education, education for members of minority groups, education to serve the community's industries. They gladly took on all services, justifying them with the claim that the "people's college" should attempt to enroll all the people.

More recently the era of declining resources has forced a redefinition of institutional purpose. The question now is not how to add a program, recruit students to it, and staff it with instructors. The key question for the 1980s is how to drop programs, how to eliminate curriculums and services. The question is no longer something versus nothing, a new program versus no program; it is which program to keep, which one to drop.

In state after state, cutbacks in funding force the choices. In enrollments, which categories of students get priority? Transfer students? The less well-prepared? The students preparing for entry-level jobs? Those who seek long-term careers? Who decides, the institutional managers or the state-level agents? Who takes hold and leads the college into the new era? Who abdicates responsibility? It is considerably more rewarding to decide which programs to add than to make choices about which ones to drop.

The change from an era of growth to one of shrinkage has also changed the pace at which decisions are made. During the time of growth, the programs shifted in relation to the clients. People seeking immediate job entry skills, transfer education, or basic literacy training were served with new programs or modifications of existing programs. Rapid growth made it relatively easy to install new programs; a college that doubled its population in a span of a few years found it simple to add a roster of new services. The change also depended somewhat on the strength of the informal, intercollege networks that bound the staff to other institutions. If the educators were in frequent contact with their counterparts in other institutions that were also growing and changing, a climate of rapid modification could be fostered.

Forced choice as to which programs to cut demands a different set of behaviors. The rationale for dropping a program is not a mirror image of the arguments for introducing it in the first place. Creating a new program could always be justified by saying that the institution was offering a new service to meet demands that were not otherwise being satisfied. Those demands may still be present when the program must be cut, but a different set of questions must be answered as programs are compared with each other, not against the criteria of lack of service to a certain constituency.

Think of the questions that must be asked when a manager must decide on which programs should be maintained. Which is most effective for its clients, that is, most verifiably educative? Which is least readily available elsewhere for the people it serves? Which has a staff that is most easily reassigned? Which is politically most attractive? Which is most distinguished and contributes most to the image that the college should maintain? Which is most supportive of or related to other college programs? Which has the best future prospects? Which is currently most vital? Which can best be justified as being socially useful? Good questions all, and all must be considered.

The context of decision making shifts as well. When programs were introduced, few of the staff members involved in other programs were concerned. New programs usually meant new facilities, new staff, new funding. If the managers could locate the resources, the staff rarely commented adversely on its introduction. However, when a program is to be eliminated, intra-institutional considerations become paramount. Whose job will be affected? Whose students will be withdrawn? What will the absence of a program mean to other programs of its type? Does

the reduction in one area of curriculum presage cuts in similar programs? Staff members tend to be considerably more skittish, hence more likely to voice their concerns, when reductions are being made. A parallel may be drawn with nations that in a time of recession seek trade barriers to protect their own industries and exports.

The leader who would manage the curriculum has to understand the directions that curriculum is taking, the forces propelling it. That leader must take a position and move the institution toward it. The astute leader knows that the institution must not be left to drift haphazardly. Early in the 1980s it was obvious that compensatory education was on the rise, that community education in its own form was falling, and that the collegiate function was struggling to maintain itself. But decisions made in each college affect the speed with which those changes occur.

Groups who line up in support for one or another of the curriculum forms are easy to find. The faculty members want stricter prerequisites for their classes. The lifelong learning advocates want an institution that offers short courses, easily entered by anyone. The business leaders want students prepared to work effectively. The true leaders understand that all groups must be accommodated, but they do not shrink from taking the institution in the direction of maximum service.

The leader who would strengthen compensatory education would: acknowledge its place in the college; see that it is not operated within a separate department but is integrated with the career and collegiate functions; send frequent messages to the secondary schools regarding college-entry expectations; and build and use a testing program that matches the realities of the instruction program.

The leader who would strengthen community education would: separate the community service division so that it operated at arms-length from the regular curriculum; give over most of the recreational portions of the program to other agencies; and establish a team of community education specialists who could turn the attention of the faculty and students in the academic program to local, national, and international issues.

The leader who would strengthen the collegiate function would: pull it back to linearity by offering fewer courses that could be taken to fulfill graduation requirements, and enforcing prerequisites and probation standards; articulate curriculum with the secondary schools; encourage consistent objectives across sections of the same courses; and demand literacy development as a goal of every course.

There is quite enough to capture the attention of the administrators and faculty alike. The institutional managers who insist that their hands are tied by externally derived rules can be safely ignored. The educational leaders can take the community colleges into forms of service frequently imagined but rarely realized.

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